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NEW FOREIGN ECONOMIC POLICY CALLED FOR IN NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON CHURCH AND ECONOMICS

"The Christian Conscience and an Economy of Abundance" was the theme of the Third National Study Conference, convened by the Department of the Church and Economic Life, of the National Council of Churches, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, from April 12 to 15. Many of the features and findings of the Conference are directly relevant to issues of U.S. foreign policy now in the making and to be decided in long-term planning. These are related also to the work of the Department of International Affairs, as a coordinate Department. Therefore, the most relevant aspects of that Conference are reported at some length as the major content of this issue of the Newsletter. This is not intended to be a comprehensive report of the Conference, but deals primarily with phases more specifically related to international affairs.

A prophetic note, of the Christian faith demanding more enlightened international economic policies for the good of all mankind, was one of the outstanding features of the Third National Study Conference on the Church and Economic Life. About 400 delegates from 32 states and D.C. participated, representing 29 denominations and numerous councils of churches, both laity and clergy, sharing the interests of management, labor, agriculture, and the consumer. Among many important emphases, basic Christian concerns in international economics were dealt with in some of the eleven discussion groups on different subjects, in major addresses and in the Conference Message.

NEW PROGRAM OF \$3 - 5 BILLION PER YEAR OUTLINED FOR U.S. FOREIGN ECONOMIC POLICY

After four sessions, representative delegates in the Discussion Group on Foreign Economic Policy adopted a report which was subsequently received by the Conference and referred to the churches for study and appropriate action. In three sections, the report set forth, first, the Basis and Nature of Christian Concern: "Christians in the United States who are beneficiaries of abundance have an overwhelming responsibility to encourage their country to contribute to the improvement of the economic well-being of other nations. It is morally intolerable to live as a rich nation in a world that is still for the most part economically poor without doing what is possible to help the people of other countries to raise their standards of living...We believe that God wills their full and free participation as our neighbors in the world community." The second section on "Problems

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of Economic Development," discussed the following points: Lack of resources, cultural patterns, political instability, lack of education, debilitating diseases, deep-seated distrust of commercial activities, poverty which prevents capital formation, the limited capacity of many underdeveloped countries to absorb foreign capital immediately, and population increase. After emphasizing that these problems are complex and formidable, the report expressed the faith that "they can be overcome with patience, knowledge, and love." The third section calls for a "Program of Action," by individuals, business enterprise, churches and other voluntary agencies, and the government. The nature and scale of foreign economic problems now demand special action by government. "We recognize that much good work has been undertaken and accomplished by our own government and by the United Nations and its specialized agencies and by other governments. Nevertheless the fact remains that, up to the present time, the pace of economic development in the underdeveloped countries has been tragically slow in many places and that to meet at all adequately the requirements of this period of history a large new program must be launched. Our government should take primary initiative, supported by the citizenry in a bipartisan manner and reinforced by the Christian conscience among our people." "Essential features" proposed in this program are:

- "a) Substantially more money should be made available by the United States government for economic development abroad. A figure of \$3 to 5 billion a year, though probably somewhat in excess of present absorptive capacity of the underdeveloped countries, is well within the capability of an economy which at present produces a gross national product of \$400 billion a year. It should be realized, however, that there are domestic claims on the available resources, and that even such a small fraction of our total product spent for economic development abroad means some sacrifice.
- b) Development funds should be made available without military or political strings. Reasonable economic conditions for our assistance, designed to assure efficient use of funds made available are, however, necessary. Countries desiring assistance should be required to present a reasonable program of development and to show evidence that the necessary managerial and administrative talent can be secured.
- c) The program should be recognized as a distinct part of our international relations, resting upon its own solid merits, and separated administratively and otherwise from military programs.
- d) The program should be put on a continuing and long-range basis. Continuity in policies, in personnel and in funds available is essential.
- e) The program should in our opinion preferably be administered through an international agency under the aegis of the United Nations."

Trade questions were given consideration as inseparable from aid questions in foreign economic policy, with the following conclusions:

"Because economic development implies membership in a world economy, we emphasize the need for a trade policy of the United States that will be consistent with and contributory to the expansion of trade so essential in accomplishing the objectives we have discussed. We endorse the report of the last National Study Conference on The Churches and World Order and its recommendations regarding the liberalization of tariffs. Means other than the raising of rates are available and should be used to offset damage which may result from lowering of tariffs. We favor membership by the United States in the Organization for Trade Cooperation."



RESOLUTIONS SENT TO DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS FOR CONSIDERATION AND ACTION

The Discussion Group on Foreign Economic Policy also proposed resolutions which the plenary body, without passing on their merits, "referred to the Department of International Affairs of the National Council of Churches for immediate consideration and action:" These resolutions included the following:

"Urgently calls upon the churches to support the enactment of legislation by the Congress of the United States:

"1. Embodying the program of foreign economic aid contained in President Eisenhower's Message to Congress on March 19th, including provisions for continuity and flexibility.

"2. Approving United States membership in the Organization for Trade Cooperation.

Expresses "the conviction to the churches that in addition to the encouragement of private investment, substantially larger sums of investment capital from public sources should be made available for the development of economically under-developed countries; and urges that the United States government take the initiative in setting up and carrying through an expanded program of such a character...A major part of this program preferably should be administered through an international agency, or agencies, now under or to be established under the aegis of the United Nations. Financial contributions from the United States and other member countries should be large enough to permit continuity of policy and operations for a period of several years. To the extent that this expanded program is conducted directly by the United States it should have assurance of continuity and flexibility, should be administered separately from military programs, should make reasonable economic conditions to be met by recipient countries but be free from military or political requirements on their part."

This discussion group had as its chairman, Wesley F. Rennie, Executive Director of the Committee for Economic Development, as its secretary, Dr. John C. Bennett, Dean of Union Theological Seminary, and as its consultant, Dr. Wolfgang F. Stolper, specialist in international economics, of the University of Michigan.

FAIR DISTRIBUTION OF ABUNDANCE FOR ALL PEOPLE SET FORTH AS CHRISTIAN GOAL

A Discussion Group on "Distribution of Abundance" declared that the fair distribution of abundance to assure "a reasonable level of living" both here and abroad is a primary Christian responsibility of our total society. The report, referred by the plenary body to the member churches for study and action deplored war-related spending as a means of stimulating the nation's economy and urged formation of responsible Christian opinion on "how" as well as "how much" military money should be spent. Speaking to the latent fear that the reduction of military spending would mean insecurity and economic depression, the report claims, on the contrary, "We as Christians recognize that the security of America can be built more effectively through the development of economic resources in other nations than by the building of military bases and the equipping of indigenous armies."

It is the responsibility of the churches, they declared, to help develop an international situation which would make possible the elimination of military spending, and to help create public opinion which would permit the spending of money for other than military defense. When military expenditures are reduced, they will have to be replaced by personal civilian expenditures and by spending abroad to assist other nations in creating their own "economies of abundance," the report points out.

It described as the minimum goal for the distribution of abundance: "The right of all persons to a reasonable level of living, including food, shelter, clothing,



health care and access to cultural interests; and the opportunity through the economic processes for people to earn the full fruit of their labor without unfair encroachment."

Emphasizing that sharing abundance is not enough unless it changes the quality of the lives sharing it, they point out that "As a man does not live by bread alone, so a man's life does not consist in the abundance of things which he possesses. At home and abroad there must be shared along with the abundance the knowledge of the saving love of God in Christ Jesus who came that all might have life and have it more abundantly."

#### SPEAKERS FROM MANAGEMENT, LABOR AND FARM GROUPS DISCUSS INTERNATIONAL ISSUES

An internationally recognized business leader, Paul G. Hoffman, former administrator of the Economic Cooperation Administration (The Marshall Plan), proposed in an address at the Conference a new foreign economic program at a cost of about \$25 billion for the next five years, for "waging the peace." He suggested that the President appoint a commission of top civilian experts to develop such an expanded program of overseas aid as a counter to new Kremlin tactics. His proposals carry the weight of his own business and international experience: He is a former president and director of the Ford Foundation and serves on the boards of directors of such firms as Encyclopaedia Britannica, New York Life Insurance Co., Time, Inc., United Air Lines, and Studebaker-Packard Corporation, of which he is chairman.

"The Communist goal of world conquest has not altered with the change in leaders," he said. "Lenin...developed the strategy for communizing the world which called for action on four fronts: the military, the political, the economic and the informational. But whereas Stalin placed great emphasis upon periphery military actions and threats of military action, the new leaders put their stress upon trade offers and offers of economic aid."

To counter this, he declared, "we must have an all-out effort for peace. We must wage peace with imagination, boldness and dedication."

As an illustration of contrast of efforts being made at the present time, he cited the fact that the U.S. Information Agency is spending \$90 million, while the Soviet Union is reportedly spending between one billion and two billion dollars annually on "information" services!

The dimensions of the total program for "waging the peace" as outlined by Mr. Hoffman include for the next five years about \$25 billion for non-military use, including \$15 billion for economic aid, \$9 billion for political activities and \$1 billion for informational activities. He envisions \$175 billion for military defense spent in the same five year period, saying it "is necessary, but it buys us only time and time is on our side only if we use it. If we fail to spend the \$25 billion for economic, political and informational activities, the \$175 billion will have served no long-range purpose."

Getting Congress to appropriate these sums, he indicated, will take "heroic efforts on the part of those who understand the need. It is comparatively easy to get billions for bullets and difficult to get millions for peace."

In addition to a vast new program of economic aid to help other peoples of the underdeveloped areas to help themselves, Mr. Hoffman outlined four aspects of a program on the political front calling for major U.S. efforts to combat Communist tactics:

1. Counter Kremlin efforts to create dissension among the free western nations.
2. Strive diligently to promote better understanding between Western nations and the new nations that have emerged and are emerging in Asia and Africa.
3. Despite every discouragement, promote better understanding between the peoples and leaders of the free world and the communist world.
4. Greatly strengthen support of the United Nations.



A labor leader, Elwood D. Swisher, asked in his address: "How can we build the kind of world here and now in which no child goes to bed hungry at night, ... in which no one willing to work goes jobless ... in which no person is denied his rights as a child of God because of the immorality of discrimination?" The Vice-President of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers International Union, AFL-CIO, Mr. Swisher, speaking as a Christian and long-time church member said that he believes "the best way to insure man's spiritual well-being is first to help him work toward assuring his economic well-being." He cited "a world of peace" as one of the goals of organized labor.

He called upon all Christians and the clergy in particular to join hands with labor in facing realistically the problem of segregation and other issues, such as automation and atomic energy. "Above all we must come to grips with our problems at first hand. We must participate fully in the political and economic processes at work in our world. We must fight on the ground where the battle is." Addressing himself particularly to "preachers," he said, "The farther you remove yourselves from the desperate concerns of those to whom you minister, the farther they will remove themselves from your church and your influence in the affairs of the spirit."

On atomic energy, he discussed the special concerns of his union, nearly seven thousand members of it at work now in atomic energy plants -- plants that still are producing materials for war to a far greater extent than they are producing materials to benefit mankind in a world of peace. "We have proposed a ten-point program for peaceful use of atomic energy. We sent it to Congress. We appeared before the Joint Congressional Committee on Atomic Energy. We are lobbying for legislation to implement those proposals. We are talking with congressmen and senators, we are publicizing the program with every device at our command. Why? Because we know that the choice before all of us is simply whether this virtually limitless source of energy will be our master, or whether we will master it. Here, too, there is no doubt as to the ethical solution to the utilization of atomic energy. The question is in what practical ways can we insure that the binding force of the atom be harnessed to conquer man's ancient enemies, poverty, hunger and disease ... If ever there was a tool at hand to provide that economy of abundance for all the people of the world, atomic energy is it. Challenge? Opportunity? Here in one package is all the challenge and opportunity to fill a thousand lifetimes, if we but work at the ethical aspects of the problem."

....

"Working together, each of us seeking to help the other, we will build the better world that has been our dream ever since the Father of us all breathed a soul into the first man."

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A national leader in the cooperative movement and agricultural concerns, Murray D. Lincoln, now President of the Nationwide Insurance Company, said that the big news today is that mankind is entering an age of plenty when he need no longer be cold and hungry. We can "win for the world a lasting surcease from poverty and misery."

He called for rooting out the causes of war, and turning to moral alternatives. He urged that oil and arms be taken out of competition in the Middle East, with the United Nations offering the best channel to do this. Advocating more reliance on non-violence and peaceful alternatives, he said that this would make an "about face" on many fronts in our foreign policy; that arms competition, cold-war-economic-aid and colonialism are being used as war-related means in the power struggle and only by removing them can we diminish the danger of war. We must shift from patterns of scarcity to abundance, he said, "with the goal of satisfying all the real needs and desires of people -- everywhere." He urged: Finding ways to share agricultural surplus; more and better education; and desegregation. He urged exporting human values, as well as surplus and technology, in concepts of "the dignity of the individual," "equal justice under law," and democracy with fairness for all, for a "world of intelligent cooperation based on the abundance we know how to create."



MESSAGE OF THE CONFERENCE DEALS WITH INTERNATIONAL ISSUES

The Conference adopted, with applause and critical thought, a Message on the theme of "The Christian Conscience and an Economy of Abundance," saying in part:

"We are entering a new age in the history of mankind. For the first time in human experience it appears possible that enough can be produced to meet the basic needs of man. We may refer to this new period as an age of abundance in contrast with past ages of economic scarcity. The promises of this economy are great but its perils are so real that we cannot evade the challenges which this new age brings to the Christian conscience.

....

"As Christians we must interpret such an event as the coming of a new economic age from the point of view of the revelation of God in Jesus Christ.

"In the Christian understanding of the responsibility of man in the economic order, the primary fact is that God is the Creator of all that is, and all creative forces flow from him. Man is a creature of the Creator, and his role is that of a trustee. The scope of this trusteeship and the range of its redemptive possibilities are revealed in God's revelation in Christ. For Christ identifies himself completely with every man in every man's need. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren ye have done it unto me." This fact places the economic life of man in the very center of Christian faith and obedience. Here the conscience is deeply troubled. For the need of one's neighbor is Christ's own call to Christian faith and work.

....

"In every environment and in every historic era man is confronted by the choice whether to seek in humility the will of God in administering the resources God has entrusted to him, or to use the divine gifts of nature and man's genius simply to satisfy his self-centered desires. It is clear from the Bible and from experience that the selfishness of man vastly multiplies his problems and threatens his destruction on every level of attainment.

....

"If ever there was a time when as a people we needed to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with our God -- that time is now. We may be sure that to whom much has been given of him shall much be required.

....

"In an age of increasing abundance the Christian obligation assumes new dimensions. For in such an age Christian duty is not done until everyone has access to the basic necessities of life. But this Christian duty cannot be discharged by the mere giving of material goods to those who do not share in the abundance. It must be done in ways which recognize the dignity of each person and each group whom Christians would help. It must be done by the sharing of such knowledge, and assistance in the development of such facilities and institutions, and in the creation of such conditions as will enable people to help themselves. It must be done by methods that will call the Christian principle of mutuality into play.

....

"As we look beyond the borders of our own country we find a world where millions of people are hungry or ill-fed. No people can call itself Christian, if, possessed of the means to abundance, it fails to exert every effort within its power to relieve want wherever it exists. No people can live in isolated plenty in the midst of a needy world and expect to avoid the withering of its Christian spirit. As stewards of abundance, owing all to God, we must in simple justice and brotherhood share with those in need.

"There are and there will be circumstances where stark suffering or the consequences of disaster justify and require the direct giving of what people need. In such circumstances the giving should be done with no expectation of return, no political strings on the gift, and with mutual respect and regard between the recipient and the giver.



"But a more far-reaching Christian act, which will build for better Christian relationships, is assistance to people to help themselves, the sharing not only of things but of knowledge, techniques, methods, and the creative spirit. To this end Christians should support substantial participation by individuals, private agencies and the government of the United States in a long-range program of cooperation with the people of other nations. Such programs should include the promotion of mutually advantageous world trade and assistance in the development of the less economically developed countries of the world. In these endeavors the agencies of the United Nations should be used as fully as possible.

"In our time it is required not only of the Church but of individual Christians that they make certain choices and decisions in the light of the Gospel. The Christian must choose to wage peace and to do all in his power to prevent war. But he must face the full implications of his decision. He must realize that national armament can never bring any permanent peace. It can do no more than buy time in which to wage peace by Christian methods, using every economic, moral, intellectual, and spiritual resource to that end.

"Progress is not inevitable, nor is any guarantee of continuance of our prosperity to be found in the pattern of historical events. In endeavoring to make sure that the abundance we see about us does not prove a false dawn, Christians must choose and support methods of maintaining and increasing that abundance which are consistent with the Christian ethic. They cannot accept the idea that military expenditures are a necessary prop to our economy, but seek their reduction at the earliest time and to the greatest extent that is consistent with the safety of the free world. Christians should decide now to support constructive substitutes for military expenditures when the latter can be reduced. Among these, besides additional overseas economic development programs, are the expansion of programs for the elimination of slums, the redevelopment of blighted areas, and conservation of neighborhoods in American cities, for the building of hospitals and carrying forward a broad attack on disease, for the maintenance and construction of highways, and for the orderly development of natural resources.

....  
 "Under God, this age of abundance, bringing a rich experience of interdependence to men and nations, can be an age in which the Church of Christ undertakes its task with new urgency. For it is preeminently the Church that is charged with pointing men to the supreme source of guidance and power in One who said, "I came to save the World."

The Message Committee included a large number of delegates, representing a cross-section, and was headed by Dr. Justin Wroe Nixon, Professor Emeritus of Colgate-Rochester Divinity School, with former Congressman Jerry Voorhis as Secretary.

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The Conference was arranged by the Department of the Church and Economic Life, Cameron P. Hall, Executive Director, and Miss Elma Greenwood, Associate Executive Director. Presiding over the Conference was the Chairman of that Department, the Hon. Charles P. Taft, Mayor of Cincinnati, who has played a prominent role in U.S. and international church life. The advance study booklet for the Conference was Your Christian Conscience and American Abundance, by Dr. Leland J. Gordon, economist, of Denison University, and Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr, Professor of Applied Christianity, at Union Theological Seminary.

Follow-up materials are scheduled: A Conference Report including the Message and The Findings of the 11 Discussion Groups, by June; copies of the addresses, shortly thereafter. A Study Guide for church groups, based on the Message and Reports, and also a know-how book on resources, techniques and methods of setting up local discussions on the Conference theme, by fall. For further information, address The Department of the Church and Economic Life, National Council of Churches 297 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N.Y.



RESOURCES: BOOKLET - Great Decisions. The U.S. Looks Ahead; Headline Series, Foreign Policy Association, Number 115, January-February 1956. In this period when a number of crucial decisions are in the making in U.S. foreign policy, this publication is most helpful and timely. Its assumption: "Where the United States goes from here depends in large measure on where it has been and where the American people want it to go." (p.5) The decisions discussed are: "Is There an American Way in Foreign Policy?" by Dexter Perkins. "Does U.S. Depend on the Rest of the World?" by Harlan Cleveland, "How shall We Deal with the U.S.S.R.?" by Harrison E. Salisbury. "Do We Need Strong and Global Defenses?" by Edward L. Katzenbach, Jr. "Do We Have a Stake in Europe?" by Saul K. Padover. "Do We Have a Stake in Asia?" by Harold H. Fisher. "Do We Have a Stake in Colonial Africa?" by Emory Ross. "Do We Need Partners and Friends?" by Norman D. Palmer. Each chapter includes Discussion Questions, Reading References, and Visual Aid suggestions. An outline is also given for "A Community Program." 94 pages. 35¢ per single copy from the Foreign Policy Association, Inc. 345 E. 46th St., New York 17, N. Y.

CONGRESSIONAL CALENDAR: STATUS OF SOME PROPOSED LEGISLATION ON FOREIGN POLICY

Mutual Security Program (HR 10082): To authorize Administration proposals for foreign aid, military and economic, and for international cooperation, at approximately the same expenditure levels as last year in non-military funds. Total request: \$4,859,975,000. Of that, \$4,130,700,000 is for military aid, direct and supporting. Non-military aid includes Development Assistance, Technical Cooperation (Bilateral - \$140.5 million, UN - \$15.5 million); new provisions for Mid-East Fund - \$100 million, and for Foreign Atomic Projects - \$5,950,000. UN, UNICEF and similar expenditures are also in this bill. Features include provisions for flexibility and for long-term commitments, of up to \$100 million per year for 10 years. At writing, it is before the House Foreign Affairs Committee, James P. Richards (D., S.C.), Chairman. President Eisenhower said this program is "urgent." He declared: "Today it remains as indispensable to the security of every American citizen and to the building of an enduring peace as on the day it began nine years ago." The outlook? Opposition has been expressed by important leaders in House and Senate. Every year since the Marshall Plan, Congress has reduced such proposals by Administrations. Many Congressmen said recently they feel no urgency to support non-military foreign aid "because the people are not interested." Is this true of church people, or are they again beginning to let their Congressmen know of Christian concern now?

U.S. Membership in O.T.C. (HR 5550): To authorize the U.S. to become a constituting member of the Organization for Trade Cooperation which would provide a secretariat for the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade. The President has repeatedly urged this legislation as necessary for the U.S. to continue responsible leadership in world trade. The House Ways and Means Committee has ordered it favorably reported, with amendments.

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